

STATE GOVERNMENT NEWS

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LEGISLATIVE SERVICES, PROCEDURES

Improved Facilities -- Legislators in Arkansas, Tennessee and Texas are benefiting this year from improved facilities and working conditions.

In Arkansas, completion in 1958 of a Supreme Court Building to house the Court, the Law Library and the offices of the Attorney General has permitted remodeling of several capitol rooms for Senate reception and committee purposes. As new House rooms were made available earlier, most of the committee hearings of the Arkansas legislature can now be held in the capitol rather than in downtown hotels as in the past.

Restoration of Tennessee's historic hill-top capitol was completed recently. It provides for simplified access to the building by an underground tunnel and new elevators. Much needed committee space was also provided in the basement of the capitol. The exterior of the capitol and frescoes and art work in the interior have been restored.

In Texas, legislators soon will work in an air-conditioned capitol for the first time. Early completion of Supreme Court, State Office and State Library buildings will provide space for offices for members and committees of the House of Representatives. Senators have private offices in the capitol.

Legislative Budget Committee -- Governor Stephen L. R. McNichols of Colorado has signed an act giving specific statutory authority for creation and operation of a Joint Legislative Budget Committee. The law authorizes a staff and sets forth broad powers to carry out the legislature's appropriation responsibility. The committee and staff formerly operated under general statutory and legislative resolution authority.

Georgia Legislative Committee and Counsel -- The Georgia legislature recently passed a bill creating a Joint Committee on the Operations of the General Assembly and providing

for the office of Legislative Counsel.

The measure directs the committee to study and make recommendations to the legislature on methods for utilizing space in the capitol more efficiently. It also provides for revision and codification of laws and directs the committee to provide services and facilities to members of the legislature. The services would include legislative counseling, bill drafting and provision of legislative reference material.

The office of Legislative Counsel will assist the committee, advise members of the legislature and prepare proposed legislation.

New Mexico Manual -- The Taxpayer's Association of New Mexico has issued a Citizen's Guide to the 1959 New Mexico Legislature. Purpose of the manual is to assist citizens in understanding the work of the legislature through knowledge of its framework and procedures. The manual, of sixteen pages, is divided into two sections. One describes the structure and operation of the legislature, committee work, the passage of a bill, the Legislative Council and the legislative workload. The second part deals with the makeup of the present legislature and gives a brief biography of each Senator and Representative.

Committee Rules Manual -- The Oklahoma Legislative Council during the 1957-59 interim developed a proposed "Committee Rules Manual." Its objective is to standardize procedure and provide uniform rules for standing and special legislative committees. Approved by the council, these rules now have been adopted by some of the committees. In developing the manual the relevant rules of other states, particularly those of New Hampshire and Texas, were studied extensively.

Open Sessions -- New rules adopted by the Vermont Senate provide that consideration of gubernatorial appoint-

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ments shall be in open sessions. Previously the Senate traditionally went into executive session for consideration of such appointments.

ELECTIONS

Presidential Primary -- The Minnesota legislature has voted to abolish the Presidential primary election. A bill eliminating the primary law passed the House without debate March 2. It already had Senate approval. The Minnesota primary law was enacted in 1949.

Report on Election Laws -- A special election law study commission established by the Rhode Island legislature in 1958 has submitted a report recommending numerous changes in the state's election laws. Most of the proposals relate to primaries.

The commission recommends discontinuance of holding primaries for the two major parties on separate days. It would have them for both on the same day at the same places. The primary would be on the second Tuesday in June instead of in September. Procedural changes are proposed to improve the opportunity of candidates in primaries who do not have the endorsement of party organizations.

Affecting general as well as primary elections, the commission proposes that boards of canvassers which supervise elections be authorized to shift polling places outside voting districts when necessary. It suggests that voting officials' fees be increased to \$35 per day.

TAXATION

Alaska Property Tax -- The new State of Alaska stands to collect more than \$1.5 million in back taxes and interest as the result of a United States Supreme Court decision on an old territorial property tax. The ruling dealt with the state's right to collect property taxes under a law passed by the territory in 1949 and repealed in 1953. The high court decision reversed earlier rulings by the United States District Court and a Circuit Court.

The decision directly involved \$175,000 in taxes owed by eight firms but will affect more than 8,600 taxpayers who withheld payment of \$1,115,000 in taxes between 1949 and 1953 pending the outcome of the case. Penalties and 6 per cent interest are expected to add several hundred thousand dollars to the amount collectable.

The court based its decision on an Alaska statute which saves rights to the state accrued under a statute that is repealed. No exceptions are made in this provision, the court ruled, and no other Alaska statute interferes with the collection of accrued unpaid taxes.

Mining Property Taxation -- A Colorado district court has upheld the state's authority to tax private mining operated for profit on

federal land. The decision clarifies the status of tax money collected under protest from uranium mining leaseholders in several Colorado counties. In a suit to recover tax money, a uranium producer contended that the state and its counties had no right to collect taxes on land owned by the federal government. The court upheld the state's contention that the levy was legally proper under a Colorado statute on taxation of mining properties that has been in effect since late in the 19th century.

Income Tax Withholding -- Massachusetts has become the twelfth state to adopt a withholding system for payment of state income taxes. Its withholding law was signed by Governor Foster Furcolo February 6, with payroll deductions to begin February 15. Deductions for the first six weeks will be double the normal rate in order to cover the period from January 1, 1959.

A sizeable increase in collections is anticipated under the withholding system. Part of the proceeds collected in 1959 will be distributed to cities and towns. Taxes on 1958 incomes, meantime, will be paid this year as scheduled.

The law permits employers to retain a share of amounts deducted to cover bookkeeping costs. Large employers may retain 1/2 of 1 per cent of the amounts deducted from payrolls, and small employers may keep up to 3 per cent.

State Taxing Authority -- The United States Supreme Court, in two opinions on February 24, upheld the rights of the states in taxing out-of-state corporations and in taxing imports under certain conditions. Many states have levied corporate income taxes or other types of corporate taxes on businesses engaged in interstate commerce. These taxes have been upheld in the past when applied to concerns domiciled within the taxing state or engaged in intrastate commerce in them.

In one February opinion, (*Northwestern States Portland Cement Company v. State of Minnesota and T. V. Williams, Georgia State Revenue Commissioner v. Stockham Valves and Fittings, Inc.*), the court upheld state corporate income taxes even though the companies

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were not "doing business" within the state in the sense in which this term usually is applied. The court said that a state may tax that portion of income derived from activities within the state. The effect of this opinion is to broaden considerably the taxing authority of the states with respect to businesses engaged in interstate commerce. The opinion is also expected to lead to new demands for greater uniformity among the states in the formulas used for apportioning income of interstate corporations.

The second opinion, (Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company v. Stanley J. Bowers, Tax Commissioner of Ohio and United States Plywood Corporation v. City of Algoma, Wisconsin), dealt with the right of a state or local government to levy property taxes on raw materials imported into the United States. The constitutional ban on state taxation of exports and imports had been interpreted to mean that taxes cannot be levied against imports so long as they are in the original package. In the cases just decided, the court held that states or local governments

could tax imported raw materials stored by a manufacturer for immediate use in operations. This decision also will have the effect of broadening the taxing powers of the states and their local units.

Tax Commissions' Project -- The Oregon and Washington State Tax Commissions have agreed to be joint sponsors of a residential building cost factor book. It will be distributed to assessors in both states. The agreement calls for separate factor books for each state to replace those issued independently by the two commissions in 1952. The book will be the first of a three-volume set the commissions hope to produce jointly. The second will cover farm properties and the third commercial-industrial properties.

AUTO SALES FINANCING

Massachusetts' Record -- Massachusetts in 1958 adopted legislation requiring automobile finance companies to be licensed by

GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS AT BILOXI

The Executive Committee of the Governors' Conference met at the Buena Vista Hotel, Biloxi, Mississippi, February 23-24 under the chairmanship of Governor LeRoy Collins of Florida. Governor James P. Coleman of Mississippi, a member of the committee, was host to the group.

Committee action included determination of the program for the 1959 Annual Meeting of the Governors' Conference, which will be held at San Juan, Puerto Rico, August 2-5; preliminary revision of the Articles of Organization of the Conference (subject to final approval at the next annual meeting); tentative approval of a proposed trip of the Executive Committee to Soviet Russia during June or early July; and re-establishment of the Advisory Committee on the National Guard. In addition, Governor Collins named a number of replacements to committees of the Governors' Conference, thus bringing all of them up to full strength.

All members of the Executive Committee were in attendance. In the photograph below, taken at Biloxi, the Governors are: Seated from left to right -- Robert B. Meyner, New Jersey; LeRoy Collins, Florida; James P. Coleman, Mississippi; and William G. Stratton, Illinois. Standing from left to right -- Cecil H. Underwood, West Virginia; Stephen L. R. McNichols, Colorado; George D. Clyde, Utah; John E. Davis, North Dakota; and William F. Quinn, Hawaii.



the State Department of Banks and to abide by regulations of the department. The law established a maximum finance charge of \$8 per \$100 on the sale of new cars, \$10 per \$100 on cars not more than two years old and \$12 per \$100 on all other cars. Since passage of the law, the number of companies in the state engaged in financing automobile sales has dropped from 250 to 90. The measure is generally credited with eliminating many questionable practices in installment buying of automobiles.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Traffic Fatalities Decline -- In spite of substantial increases in vehicular use, traffic deaths during 1958 declined from 1957 figures by sizeable percentages in a number of states. Michigan reduced its traffic fatality total by 12.6 per cent. It was the third consecutive year in which the state has shown a better than 10 per cent drop. South Carolina traffic deaths during 1958 declined from 1957 figures by 20 per cent and Georgia's almost 10 per cent. In Wisconsin the traffic fatality total in 1958 was 100 below the previous year.

Cooperation on License Suspension -- Officials of Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania met recently in Trenton, New Jersey, and agreed to cooperate in suspending licenses of drivers convicted of serious offenses.

The meeting was called by Ned J. Parsesian, Acting Director of the New Jersey Division of Motor Vehicles, to discuss problems of enforcing license suspension in cases involving non-resident drivers. Attention has been focused on this matter as the result of new legislation in New Jersey. Its law provides for suspension of licenses of drivers convicted of excessive speeding. Some two-thirds of the motorists arrested for this offense since January 1 are residents of other states. Under the act, drivers convicted have their licenses suspended for thirty days. Out-of-state drivers lose New Jersey driving privileges for this period.

At the conference, officials agreed that drivers convicted in any of the four states of travelling 70 miles per hour in a 60 mph zone or 60 mph in a 50 mph zone should have their licenses suspended in each of the four states. The recent New Jersey legislation provides for suspension under these conditions, and Connecticut law also requires suspension for such an offense. Representatives of Delaware and Pennsylvania agreed to recommend necessary administrative and legislative changes for the same purpose.

The officials further agreed that drivers from any of their states found driving while under suspension would have their licenses suspended for an additional period of at least three months. Existing reciprocal arrangements, under which each of the states suspends the licenses of its drivers who are convicted of drunken driving in

other states, were reaffirmed.

Also proposed was a system whereby out-of-state motorists would be relieved of posting of bonds when arrested for traffic violations. They would be given the privilege of paying fines by mail. Compliance would be assured by the Motor Vehicle Administrators in the home states, who would be empowered to suspend licenses of motorists who did not pay the fines. A decision on this proposed system is expected at a meeting in April.

Pennsylvania Traffic Safety Drive -- State officials in Pennsylvania have announced action on three fronts in an effort to reduce traffic accidents and fatalities.

Governor David L. Lawrence has ordered the State Turnpike Commission to stiffen its safety efforts and to enforce speed regulations more strictly.

The Governor also has announced that he will ask the legislature for authority to revoke drivers' licenses for a first conviction of a speeding violation. Revocation would be for thirty days. A second conviction would bring a sixty day revocation, and a third indefinite revocation. Such legislation would be similar to the Connecticut system.

The State Police have been assigned to assist courts in Philadelphia in efforts to deal with repeated traffic offenders who fail to appear in court. Names of such persons are being turned over to the Bureaus of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. These agencies then revoke driver licenses and suspend license plates. The State Police are seeking such offenders, in order to pick up the plates and licenses and to serve subpoenas for appearance in court.

EDUCATION

Higher Education Report -- The Rhode Island Commission to Study Higher Education has submitted a report to the Governor, with recommendations for meeting state needs in the next two decades.

It recommends that facilities at the University of Rhode Island be enlarged to handle an enrollment of 7,500 students in 1980 and that a state system of community colleges be established for an expected enrollment of 6,300 in the same year. For student assistance the commission suggests a state program to provide scholarships ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 for 5 per cent of the state's high school graduates each year.

The report emphasizes the importance of regional programs in higher education and of continuing study and planning for higher educational needs. Noting the significant role of private colleges and universities, the commission urges that they be aided through liberal tax exemption provisions and by permitting use of state scholarships at private as well as public institutions.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Wabash Valley Compact -- Governor Harold W. Handley of Indiana on February 26 signed a bill enacting the Wabash Valley Compact. Prospects were considered favorable for early enactment in Illinois. The compact has passed the Illinois Senate and recently was approved by the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives. Consent legislation approving the compact has been drafted and is expected to be introduced soon in Congress. Objective of the instrument is the balanced development of the Wabash Valley on an area-wide basis.

HEALTH, WELFARE

New York Narcotics Study -- A New York Special Joint Legislative Committee on Narcotic Study has issued a report to the Governor and the legislature recommending creation of a three-member commission to deal with narcotics addiction. The commission would be set up in the executive office of the Governor.

The report called narcotics addiction the state's most complex and difficult health problem and noted that 43 per cent of the nation's addicts live in New York State.

Among other recommendations the committee urged removal from the penal law of the minimum sentence on first narcotic felonies, now set at three years. A third offense in a narcotic felony now calls for a mandatory sentence of fifteen years to life imprisonment; the report recommended that this penalty be reserved for a fourth offense. On another aspect the report urged that facilities be established in state and city hospitals for users of illegal drugs wishing treatment. Such facilities, the report pointed out, are available in states where narcotics addiction is far less a problem.

Welfare Recommendations -- A special committee reporting to Governor David L. Lawrence of Pennsylvania has recommended numerous changes in the administration of welfare services. To foster decentralization, the committee proposed that the State Department of Public Welfare establish regional offices and that a legislative commission develop detailed plans for county welfare departments. Establishment of a single merit system for the entire state department was another recommendation. The committee advocated provision for departmental purchases of welfare services from private agencies and institutions instead of direct appropriations for these services. Also recommended were transfer of ten general hospitals owned by the state to private ownership and a recodification of state welfare laws.

Recommend Coordinating Commission -- The Texas Legislative Council has published a detailed report on Services and Programs for the Mentally Retarded, Physically Handicapped and

Chronically Ill in Texas. The study, undertaken at the request of the 1957 legislature, includes an examination of the existing facilities for the education, training, care and treatment of physically and mentally handicapped persons.

The report's major recommendation is for creation of an ex-officio coordinating group, a Texas Coordinating Commission for State Welfare Services, within the Executive Department. It would deal with all phases of the state's welfare activities.

The Legislative Council suggested that the commission be composed of the Commissioners of the Departments of Health, Education, and Public Welfare, the Executive Director of the Board for Texas State Hospitals and Special Schools, the Chairman of the Texas Employment Commission and the Executive Secretary-Director of the State Commission for the Blind. Three members of the Senate, three of the House and three citizens to be appointed by the Governor also would serve on the commission.

Duties of the commission would include a continuing study and analysis of cost and adequacy of the state's welfare services and facilities, including all aspects of services for the handicapped; recommending long-range programs to be carried out by state agencies with welfare functions; and determination of changes needed in the laws pertaining to services for the handicapped.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health Compact -- Arkansas has become the thirteenth state to adopt the Interstate Compact on Mental Health. An act of its 1959 legislature designates the Superintendent of the State Hospital as Compact Administrator. The other states that have ratified the compact -- all since 1955 -- are Connecticut, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island and West Virginia.

Georgia Recommendations -- A Georgia legislative sub-committee has recommended establishment of a new branch of the Welfare Department under the direction of a trained psychiatrist with at least ten years' experience in hospital management. He would take charge of all state mental, mental defective and juvenile correction institutions. Other elements of a recommended long-range plan include earmarking \$500,000 annually for mental hospital capital outlay, requiring medical students to train at a mental hospital for several months and development of a scholarship program for psychiatrists. Also recommended are establishment of a half-way house for patients ready for release, changes in federal regulations to permit old age assistance payments while recipients are under state care, and contributions as high as \$100 per month for patient care from relatives who can afford it.

South Carolina Study -- A legislative Committee to Study Mental Health Laws and Facilities in South Carolina has submitted a report recommending immediate and long-range action.

Special recommendations for immediate consideration urged the legislature to (1) appropriate \$400,000 for expansion of psychiatric teaching facilities at South Carolina Medical College; (2) provide that fees collected from patients at any state mental institution be given to that institution so that it may issue bonds for capital improvements; and (3) revise the mental health laws.

As one aspect of the long-range program the committee recommended appropriations for construction of various facilities at state mental institutions and centers for mentally retarded children. Also recommended were completion of an Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center, adoption of a commitment law for alcoholics, and construction of a psychiatric-geriatrics center.

Tennessee Research Center -- The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and the University of Tennessee are cooperating in the operation of a research center for basic and clinical studies of abnormal chemical conditions associated with mental illness. Research will deal particularly with schizophrenia but will study other conditions such as alcoholism in which disturbances in body chemistry are thought to contribute to mental illness.

MENTAL RETARDATION

Day Care Center -- Delaware has opened a state supported day care center for severely mentally retarded children. Only the most helpless of the retarded are accepted for care. Purpose of the center is to try to train the children in basic phases of self-care and to relieve parents of the constant strain of caring for them at home. This is the first of a series of centers to be set up throughout the state under the jurisdiction of Dr. M. A. Tarumianz, State Psychiatrist.

Mental Retardation Commission -- An Illinois Commission on Mental Retardation has reported to the Governor on a study of needs of the state's mentally retarded and has recommended a statewide program for them.

The commission proposed establishment of a Division of Mental Retardation in the State Department of Public Welfare. Purpose of the new division would be to coordinate services to the mentally retarded and focus attention on problems involved. The report recommended that a mental retardation study commission be set up to consider the state's total program in terms of financial support, including state and local responsibility for community, public school, institutional and

research programs.

The commission urged construction of six small residential institutions with special programs, to eliminate present overcrowding at two state schools. It suggested that the Superintendent of Public Instruction provide additional consultant services to local public schools to stimulate establishment in them of new programs for the mentally retarded. Another recommendation was that the legislature and the School Problems Commission consider legislation making it mandatory for local public school districts to provide educational programs for school children of all ages, including the mentally retarded who are residents of the school districts.

Dealing with research, the commission urged support for the Institute for Research on Exceptional Children at the University of Illinois, establishment of positions of research supervisors in state institutions, and sufficient research budgets for the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Illinois Department of Public Welfare to permit special and continuous research projects.

CORRECTIONS

Pre-Parole Center -- Colorado has established a pre-parole release center to reorient prisoners nearing the end of sentence at the state penitentiary. Jointly operated by the penitentiary and the State Parole Board, the center houses prisoners during their last thirty days of confinement. They receive a series of lectures and participate in interviews intended to make them more adaptable to life outside prison. Prospective employers use the center for job interviews with prisoners before their release. Although discipline and an orderly life are required of prisoners awaiting release, the center is a minimum security facility, without locks, bars or fences.

Work was begun on the new facility in 1957 after five years of study and planning by prison and parole authorities. As prisoners performed all the labor, the center was built for \$225,000, about half the cost that otherwise would have been involved.

Correctional Program Urged -- A regional correctional program for the New England States has been urged by Arthur T. Lyman, retiring Commissioner of Corrections in Massachusetts, in his final report to the Governor. Mr. Lyman pointed out that joint use of prison facilities by the states in the region could save millions of dollars in new construction costs in the next two decades. In addition, he emphasized, a regional program would permit each state to benefit from specialized facilities available in other states. He suggested that the Governors of the New England states take the lead in developing such a program.

PROHIBITION REPEALER

Oklahoma Vote -- The Oklahoma House and Senate have passed a Senate Joint Resolution to repeal the prohibition ordinance of the state constitution. The measure will be voted on by the electorate at a special election April 7. Another Senate Joint Resolution pending in the House would authorize a special election on the same date to decide on county option.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

District Attorneys' Conference -- The second annual Louisiana Attorney General's Conference for District Attorneys was held February 20 and 21 in New Orleans. Host for the meeting was Jack P. F. Gremillion, Attorney General of Louisiana. Governor John Patterson of Alabama was guest speaker at a banquet for the attorneys. Panel discussions and addresses were given on proposed revision of the criminal code, preparation of briefs in criminal cases on appeal, non-support cases under the Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act, and laws applicable to registrars of voters.

Uniform Witness Law Upheld -- The United States Supreme Court on March 2 upheld the constitutionality of the Uniform Act to Secure Attendance of Out-of-State Witnesses. The act has been adopted by forty-four states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

The decision involved a case (New York v. Joseph C. O'Neill) in which a New York grand jury requested the attendance of an Illinois resident as a witness. The Illinois resident was then in Florida. Florida and New York, but not Illinois, have enacted the uniform act. A Circuit Judge in Florida refused to order the witness sent to New York, and the Florida Supreme Court upheld the ruling, holding the uniform law unconstitutional. The case was appealed to the United States Supreme Court, the Attorneys General of more than forty jurisdictions joining in the appeal to uphold the act.

The Supreme Court's majority decision, written by Justice Felix Frankfurter, said that in the absence of a provision in the Constitution preventing states from preserving harmony between themselves and law and order within their respective borders, the court must sustain the uniform act. The court ruled that the Florida courts had constitutional jurisdiction to order the Illinois resident's appearance before a New York grand jury even though this was to be done outside Florida. It said that the case represents at most a temporary interference with travel.

COURTS

Iowa Report on Judicial Reorganization -- The Iowa Supreme Court has submitted a report to the legislature on a study of judicial reorganization in the state. The study

dealt with the operation of state courts, court personnel, the processes for selecting judges, and judicial tenure, retirement and compensation.

It recommended that the legislature enact measures to provide for well defined supervisory and administrative control over the court system by the Supreme Court; selection of the Chief Justice on the basis of administrative ability rather than by rotation; a longer term for the Chief Justice than the six months period now prescribed by statute; and periodic conferences of judges to consider better and more efficient methods of operating the courts. Also recommended is a constitutional amendment to provide for termination of all courts inferior to the District Court.

The report proposed that vacancies in the Supreme and District Courts be filled by appointment by the Governor from lists of nominees submitted by a judicial commission and favored mandatory retirement of judges, with adequate retirement benefits.

ADMINISTRATION

Retirement Systems Studied -- A Louisiana Joint Legislative Committee to Study Retirement Systems has proposed to the Governor and legislature a series of changes in the state's fifteen public retirement systems estimated to save \$4.5 million in fiscal 1960 if adopted by the legislature that convenes in May.

Recommendations include combination of the system covering non-instructional school employees with OASI, reduction of the state contribution for state employees to an even matching basis of 5 per cent, and reduction of appropriations for teacher disability to actual reserves necessary to assure full protection for benefits. Under one recommendation, prior service of teachers and state employees would be frozen at mid-1960 levels. Otherwise, every pay raise would cause higher total retirement expense, as compensation is based on the average of the best five years of pay. This recommendation would be expected to bring the greatest long term saving.

Management Improvement Programs -- The Budget Bureau of the New Jersey Department of the Treasury, has published a report on State Government Management Improvement Programs. It summarizes the organization, progress and scope of management improvement programs in nine states, two cities and the Port of New York Authority. The following states were surveyed: California, Connecticut, Kansas, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Reports from the cities of New York and Philadelphia are included.

The report contains statements on the policy and objectives of the programs and the organization and staff of each. It lists completed and in-progress management improvement projects in the states.

Reorganization Report -- The North Carolina Commission on Reorganization of State Government has submitted to the Governor and legislature eleven reports containing thirty-three recommendations for changes in state governmental organization and procedure.

One proposal calls for consolidation of the state's water resource management programs in a new Department of Water Resources. Another is for construction of a new state building to house the legislature. Various other recommendations deal with state land management, the state accounting system, interstate cooperation, and public records management.

Consolidations Proposed -- Governor Price Daniel of Texas has approved for legislative action various housekeeping consolidations proposed by an Executive Department Study Committee. The proposals provide for centralization of the following services for agencies in the immediate capitol area: janitorial, mail and messenger, material reproduction, telephone, records management, business machine, office machine repairs and office supplies. The departments of highways, health, public safety and education would be omitted from the plan.

In developing its conclusions the committee surveyed practices in thirty-two states. It found that the majority of them had centralized telephone switchboard, janitorial and office supplies services. Other services were centralized in almost half of the states surveyed.

Abandoned Property -- Legislators in at least three states -- California, Idaho and Texas -- are considering bills to provide comprehensive transfer of abandoned or unclaimed personal property to the state. The measures are based largely on a model bill prepared by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws. Comprehensive laws on abandoned property already are in effect for eight

states: Arizona, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

Ethics in Government -- A Committee on Ethics and Standards of the New York City Council recently submitted a report urging the creation of a five-man Board of Ethics. The board would render advisory opinions to officers and employees of the city, based upon a given set of facts. Members of the board would be three private citizens, the City Corporation Counsel and the Chairman of the Personnel Department. The report suggests that the advisory opinions, like those rendered by ethics committees of professional associations, would furnish valuable guides to municipal officials and employees as well as to the public. It proposes a state law and three city ordinances to carry out its conclusions.

Loyalty Oath -- The Washington State Supreme Court by unanimous decision has upheld the constitutionality of a 1955 law requiring a loyalty oath from public employees as a condition of employment.

Validity of the act had been challenged by two faculty members of the University of Washington. Their contention that the law violated several sections of the United States Constitution was upheld by a Superior Court decision. In reversing the ruling, the high court held that the act does not limit free speech and that the state is entitled to ask an employee whether he is a member of the Communist Party or other subversive organization, as a condition of employment.

Without affecting the validity of the act as a whole, the decision voided a section of it defining subversive activity as membership in any organization placed on a list compiled by the United States Attorney General. The decision pointed out that the executive order promulgating the list was revoked before the Washington state law was passed.

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